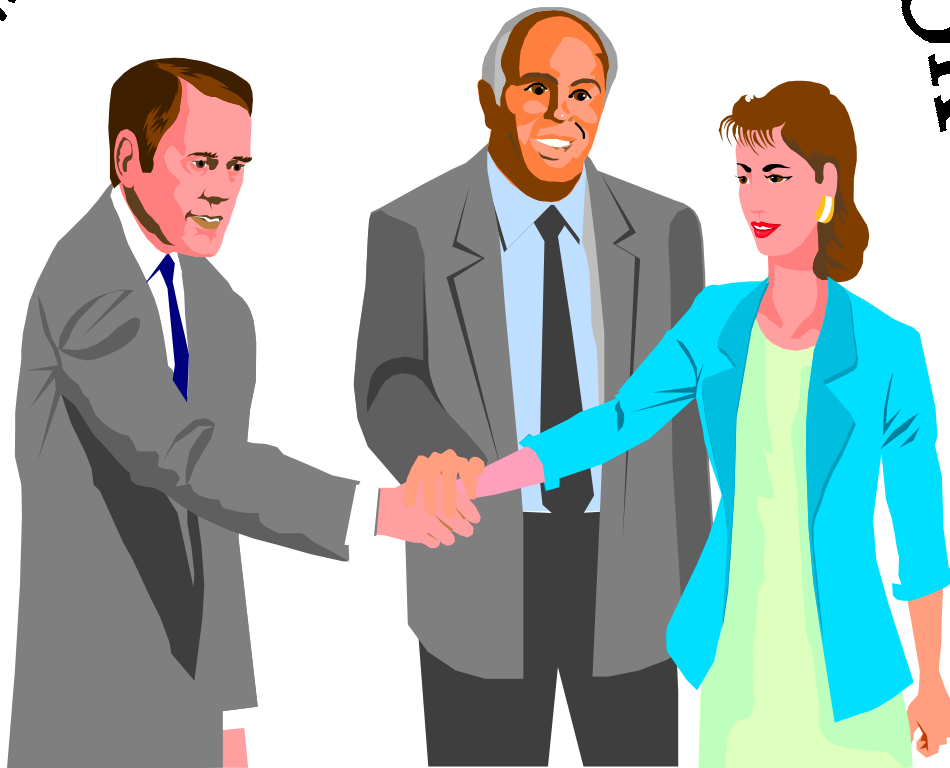


**Department of the Army
Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC)
7041 Radio Road, Building 412
Fort Polk, Louisiana 71459-5000**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



AFZX-CP (100)

MEMORANDUM FOR All New Employees

SUBJECT: *Partners in Service, Helping Leaders Meet the Mission*

1. "Glad to know you. . . happy to have you with us. . . and welcome aboard," these familiar words of greeting convey our pleasure in having you join the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk Team.

2. As you read the enclosed New Employees' Handbook, you will find that it provides general policies relating to your new job. Also, you will soon note that we work together as a "team", and not as individuals and everybody wants you to play your part well. The Fort Polk Team realizes that its successes depend upon you and your co-workers, who are the lifeblood of this installation. We believe that our people are our difference.

3. You have our confidence in your ability and our pledge of fair play in exchange for your helpful effort, loyalty, and commitment to helping transform our vision into reality. We are glad to know you and happy to have you as a valued member of our team.

4. On behalf of the Commander and all of the members of Team Fort Polk, Welcome!

Encl

DONALD R. MALLET
Director, Civilian Personnel
Advisory Center

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INTRODUCTION

Fort Polk, Louisiana is the home of the Joint Readiness Training Center. Our mission, vision, and values make up our corporate core. They identify what we do, why we do it, and how we do it.

Our mission is to provide an advanced level of joint training for military forces under tough, realistic conditions. Mobilize, prepare, train, and deploy units worldwide, while taking care of soldiers, civilian employees, retirees, and families.

Our vision is to become:

--Home of the world's premier joint combat training center for light forces-continually modernizing to train units into the 21st century.

--Army's center of excellence for training, sustaining, mobilizing, and deploying combat-ready soldiers and units.

--An enduring "Best Hometown" in partnership with our surrounding communities, where our military and workforce are proud to live and serve.

Our values are:

- Teamwork
- Commitment
- Competence
- Respect/Dignity
- Trust
- Duty

We believe that each member of Team Fort Polk must understand our mission, share our vision, and display our values in all that we do. Our successes are the result of our people and their commitment to our corporate core. We trust you will join us in that commitment.

This handbook contains important information for all of HQ, JRTC and Fort Polk's new Federal employees. It is intended to serve as a general guide for policies relating to your job, but it does not provide complete information about every aspect of the subject. If you have any questions that are not answered in this handbook, or if you need additional information, consult your supervisor, Administrative Office, the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), or website <http://cpol.army.mil>. Click on PERMISS (Personnel Management Information and Support System)

and choose the topic of interest to you. Every effort has been made to ensure the information provided herein is accurate. Since the possibility of miscommunication always exists, confirm your understanding of the subject matter by referring to appropriate sources (e.g., your supervisor, Administrative Office and/or other offices, or the above mentioned website.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The CPAC is located in Building 413, on Radio Road.

The CPAC is responsible for providing advice and assistance to managers, supervisors, and civilian employees, and for liaison with the Civilian Personnel Operating Center (CPOC), Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

Throughout the Employee Handbook, where the masculine pronoun is used, it is intended to include both the masculine and feminine gender.

The CPAC Human Resources Advisors are as follows:

RETHA M. RICHARD, Human Resources Speciaist

AUGUSTINE R. ROSS, Human Resources Specialist

GLORIA RICKS, Human Resources Specialist

Sandra Ogle, Human Resources Assistant

Telephone: 531-4020

Fax: 531-1851

SECURITY

Newcomer Security Orientation

All new employees are required to be provided training in Security. Supervisors have been provided the most recent Security Orientation, which will be updated at least every 2 months. The CPAC, Training Office will distribute updated Security Orientation briefings. Your supervisor is required to present the orientation to you. Additional information may be obtained by calling the Directorate of Security & Infrastructure Protection 531-1346 or 531-6111.

Identification Cards

Reference: JRTC & FP Reg 690-18, Identification Cards.

All Fort Polk Department of the Army (DA) civilians are required to have a DOD/DA Civilian Identification Card. Possessing another identification (ID) card such as a military dependent or military retiree does not eliminate the requirement to have a DOD/DA Civilian ID Card.

A new employee will be provided the application for a Civilian ID Card during his initial in processing at the CPAC. To renew or update the Civilian ID Card, the employee will obtain an application from his Administrative Office. The completed application will then be taken to the CPAC for authentication. Once approved, the employee will take the application to the In and Out Processing Center, Bldg 1830, 14th Street for issuance of the DOD/DA Civilian ID Card.

Computer Security

All government employees using a computer are required to have initial and annual computer security awareness training. Initial training will be conducted before being assigned a password. The new employee will be required to complete the computer-based training program called DOD INFOSEC Awareness. This program will be provided to them by their Information Systems Security Officer (ISSO). The program will be supplemented with reading of the organizational SOP and JRTC and Fort Polk Command Policy Letters 48 and 63. A record of this training will be maintained by the ISSO. Annual training will consist of re-reading the SOP in combination with computer-related articles, films or formal training. Users are advised that passwords are to be memorized and not shared with another individual even though both individuals are working on the same project. Users are also advised of the copyright laws and are prohibited from loading any software on a government computer without the knowledge and permission of the ISSO. Point of contact for Computer Security issues is Dave W. Stewart, Installation ISSM, extension 531-1340.

HOURS OF WORK

References: AR 690-990-2, Book 630 and 5 CFR, Part 630.

Tour of Duty

The standard Tour of Duty for HQ, JRTC and Fort Polk employees is 0800-1630, Monday through Friday, with a 30-minute lunch break.

Overtime

Overtime work means each hour of work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in an administrative workweek that is officially ordered, approved by management, and is performed by an employee. Supervisory approval for overtime is required before it is worked, or when not feasible, as soon as possible after the overtime is worked. For each employee whose rate of basic pay does not exceed the maximum rate for GS-10, the overtime hourly rate is 1½ times the hourly rate of basic pay at the minimum rate for GS-10. Non-exempt employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) must receive overtime pay unless they request compensatory time off in lieu of payment.

Compensatory (Comp) Time

Compensatory time may be authorized in lieu of payment for overtime. When requested and authorized, non-exempt employees may work and take comp time (1 hour off for each hour worked) in lieu of receiving overtime pay. Exempt employees whose rate of pay exceeds the maximum rate for GS-10 may receive overtime pay or may be required to take comp time. Compensatory time earned should be scheduled and used as soon as possible. Compensatory time not used within 13 pay periods of the date earned automatically converts to overtime and is paid at the employee's current overtime rate. Federal Wage System (FWS) employees should use earned comp time within 26 pay periods of the date earned. If not used, it automatically converts to overtime, and is paid at the rate it was earned.

Time and Attendance (TA) Records

The Directorate Timekeeper maintains time and attendance records. All leave must be reported to them. Employees should refer questions on TA procedures to their Directorate Timekeeper.

Temporary Duty (TDY)

Temporary Duty (TDY) is work performed away from an employee's regular duty station. The TDY normally involves traveling to another location. Prior to going TDY, the employee must be nominated to attend training or travel for official duty by their supervisor. Assistance with travel arrangements may be obtained from the Travel Office. The point of contact (POC) for official travel arrangements is Carlson Travel at 531-6246. Instructions for requesting TDY orders may be obtained from your Directorate's Administrative Office.

LEAVE

References: AR 690-990-2, Book 630 and 5 CFR, Part 630. For further information, see <http://cpol.army.mil/permis> and click on Master Index of Topics. The JRTC & FP Reg 690-20 can be accessed at <http://polk-ew.army.mil>.

Annual Leave

Annual Leave is the absence from duty with pay to provide the employee with vacation time or other time off for personal reasons. Annual leave may be used in lieu of sick leave. The accrual rate will depend on an employee's type of appointment and years of Federal service, both civilian and creditable military service.

Full-time employees with 15 or more years of service earn 26 days a year (8 hours per pay period), those with 3 but less than 15 years earn 20 days (6 hours per pay period, plus 4 additional hours on the last pay period), and those with less than 3 years earn 13 days (4 hours per pay period).

Part-time employees with 15 years or more of service earn 1 hour of annual leave for each 10 hours in a pay status, those with 3 but less than 15 years earn 1 hour for each 13 hours in a pay status, and those with less than 3 years earn 1 hour for each 20 hours in a pay status.

Employees may accumulate and carry forward a balance of 30 days. Employees on an overseas assignment may accumulate 45 days. Upon returning from overseas, employees may retain the extra 15 days until their balance is reduced by leave usage. Upon separation, employees are entitled to lump sum payment for all annual leave remaining in their account.

Employees will normally apply for annual leave prior to the absence. In emergency situations when circumstances warrant, retroactive approval may be given. When emergencies arise requiring the use of annual leave not previously approved, approval of the leave may not be presumed by the employee. Except where circumstances beyond the control of the employee do not permit, the employee must contact his supervisor or other designated person, either personally or by phone, and request and obtain permission for the absence. This will occur not later than 2 hours after the beginning of the employee's workday.

Employees engaged in health care (Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses and Medical Clerks in the Clinical Support Division) and nutrition care must contact their supervisor, either personally or by phone, as early as possible but not later than the beginning of the workday, and request and obtain permission for the absence.

Non-supervisory employees of the DLEES, Fire Protection Division, must contact their supervisor or designated representative by telephone or other appropriate means not later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the employee's tour of duty.

The minimum charge for annual leave is $\frac{1}{4}$ hour.

Annual leave, which an employee may earn during the current leave year, may be made available in advance of the actual credit to the employee's account. The procedure to request an advance of annual leave is contained in the JRTC & FP Reg 690-20. Employees should contact their first line supervisor or Administrative Office to obtain the appropriate form and seek assistance in submitting the request.

Sick Leave

Sick leave may be used:

- For the purpose of receiving medical, dental, or optical treatment or examination;
- When it is established that an employee is unable to perform his duties because of physical or mental illness, injury, or her duties because of pregnancy, or childbirth;
- When his presence on the job will, as determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider, jeopardize the health of others because of exposure to a communicable disease;
- When he must be absent from duty for purposes relating to the adoption of a child.
- Sick leave may also be used for providing care for family members in accordance with the provisions of the Family Friendly Leave Act, discussed below.

For sick leave requests due to incapacitating physical or mental illness or injury, the employee must contact his immediate supervisor or designee, as early in the day as possible but not later than 2 hours after the beginning of the official work day, to obtain approval for the absence.

Employees engaged in health care (Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Medical Clerks in the Clinical Support Division) and nutrition care must contact their supervisor, either personally or by phone, as early as possible but not later

than the beginning of the workday, and request and obtain permission for the absence.

Non-supervisory employees of the DLEES, Fire Protection Division, must contact their supervisor or designated representative by telephone or other appropriate means not later than fifteen 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the employee's tour of duty.

Unless other arrangements have been made, requests for sick leave must be made on each day of absence. Requests for sick leave for prearranged medical, dental, or optical appointments must be made at least 24 hours in advance.

Except for non-supervisory employees of the DLEES, Fire Protection Division, employees will be required to submit a medical certificate from a physician for periods of sick leave in excess of 3 workdays. The non-supervisory employees of the Fire Protection Division will normally provide a medical certificate from a physician for periods of absence on sick leave in excess of 48 hours.

The requirement to submit medical certification for each day of absence may be required when imposed under special written conditions.

Full-time employees earn 13 days a year (4 hours per pay period). Part-time employees earn one hour for each 20 hours in a pay status. Sick leave may be used in $\frac{1}{4}$ hour increments.

There is no restriction on the number of hours of sick leave that may be accumulated. No lump sum payment is made when employees separate from the Federal service. However, if an employee returns to work, the sick leave is recredited to his account. Retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) are entitled to time credit in the calculation of retirement annuity for all unused sick leave to their credit at the time of retirement. (This provision does not apply to Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) employees.)

A maximum of 240 hours of sick leave may be advanced to an employee. The procedure to request advance sick leave is contained in the local regulation. The request must be supported by medical certification. The medical certificate must clearly state the period of time the employee is expected to be incapacitated from duty and the nature of the illness or injury, and must be signed by a medical doctor. Employees should contact their first line supervisor or Administrative Office to obtain the appropriate form and to seek assistance in submitting the request for advance sick leave.

Family Friendly Leave Act

The Family Friendly Leave Act (FFLA) allows employees to use sick leave to provide care for a family member as a result of physical or mental illness; injury; pregnancy; childbirth; medical, dental, or optical examination or treatment; to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member; or to attend the funeral of a family member.

Family Member Definition: A family member means the following relatives of the employee:

- Spouse, and parents thereof;
- Children, including adopted children, and spouses thereof;
- Parents;
- Brothers and sisters, and spouses thereof; and
- Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

Time that may be used: Full-time employees who maintain an 80-hour balance may use up to 104 hours (13 workdays) each year. Employees with a balance of less than 80 hours may use 40 hours (5 workdays) each year. Part-time employees or employees with an uncommon tour of duty may use an equivalent number of hours on a prorated basis. The maximum amount of sick leave used cannot exceed the number of hours normally accrued during a leave year.

Authorization: As with any other leave, supervisory approval is necessary prior to taking leave.

Documentation Required: Requests for sick leave under the provisions of the FFLA will be considered, approved, and processed in the same manner as other sick leave, except that the SF 71 will be appropriately annotated to reflect leave usage under the FFLA.

Medical documentation for the purpose of taking sick leave to care for a family member under these procedures will be required in the same manner as normally applies to the employee taking sick leave.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP)

Leave without pay is an approved absence without pay. It may be granted at the discretion of the agency for such purposes as covering absences due to insufficient leave balances, attending to parental or other family responsibilities, education which would be of benefit to the agency, recovery from illness or disability, or protection of employee status and benefits pending action on claims for disability retirement or injury compensation.

An employee cannot demand that he be granted LWOP as a matter of right, except in the cases of disabled veterans, who are entitled to LWOP, if necessary, for medical treatment; reservists and National Guardsmen, who are entitled to LWOP, if necessary to perform military training duties; and employees requesting LWOP under the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Program.

Generally, the effects of leave without pay vary depending on the length of absence. Extended periods of leave without pay will impact an employee's service computation date, waiting period for within-grade increases, and accumulation of annual and sick leave.

Military Leave

Permanent employees, temporary indefinite full-time employees, and employees with temporary appointments in excess of 1 year, who are in a National Guard or Reserve component, accrue 15 days of military leave each fiscal year. Employees with temporary appointments not to exceed 1 year are not entitled to military leave. Part-time career employees accrue a prorated share of 15 days based on the number of hours in the regularly scheduled workweek. To compute, divide 40 into the number of regularly scheduled hours and apply the fraction to 15 days. These fractions of days can be accumulated until they total whole days. Military leave is charged only in full day increments. Up to 15 days of unused accumulated military leave may be carried over into a new fiscal year for use in succeeding years. Military Leave is computed on a calendar-day basis rather than on a workday basis. Hence, nonworkdays falling within a period of military leave are charged against the military leave account; although nonworkdays occurring at the beginning or end of the active duty period are not charged.

Military leave is for use when called for active duty or active duty training. It is not authorized for periods of inactive duty training (usually weekend drills). This leave entitles employees to receive their regular civilian pay plus military pay on days of military leave.

To use military leave, employees must notify their supervisor as far in advance as possible and provide a copy of the military

orders calling them to active duty. Upon returning to duty, employees will be required to furnish proof of performance of the military duty.

Court Leave

Court leave may be used when summoned for jury duty or as a witness in a nonofficial capacity on behalf of a state or local government, or on behalf of a private party in a judicial proceeding to which the United States, the District of Columbia, or a state or local government is a party.

To obtain authorization to use court leave, employees should notify their supervisor of the subpoena or summons as far in advance as possible. If a court order, subpoena, or summons is issued, a copy must be given to the supervisor to support the grant of court leave. Upon return to duty, written evidence of attendance at court is required. Normally, a statement may be obtained from the court clerk showing the dates and hours of service.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

To be eligible for FMLA leave, employees must have completed at least one year of civilian service with the government. Temporary employees, serving under an appointment with a time limitation of one year or less, and intermittent employees are excluded from coverage.

Entitlements: 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for covered employees for the following purposes:

- The birth of a son or daughter of the employee and the care of such son or daughter;
- The care of a spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee, if such individual has a serious health condition;
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform essential functions of his position.

Under certain conditions, FMLA leave may be taken intermittently, or the employee may work under a work schedule that is reduced by the number of hours of leave taken as family and medical leave.

An employee may elect to substitute other paid time off, as appropriate, for any unpaid leave under the FMLA. The FMLA leave is in addition to other paid time off available to an employee.

Job Benefits and Protection: Upon return from FMLA leave, an employee must be returned to the same position or to an "equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay status, and other terms and conditions of employment."

An employee who takes FMLA leave is entitled to maintain health benefits coverage. An employee may pay the employee share of the premiums on a current basis or upon his return to work.

Advance Notice and Medical Certification: The employee must provide notice of his intent to take FMLA not less than 30 days before leave is to begin or as soon as is possible.

Medical certification is required for FMLA leave taken to care for an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition or for the serious health condition of the employee.

Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program allows an employee who has a medical emergency to receive transferred annual leave from other employees.

In order to be eligible to receive transferred leave, an employee must be eligible to accrue and use leave, and must:

- Have been affected by a medical emergency which resulted (or is resulting) in an absence from duty for at least 24 hours without available paid leave and is likely to result in a substantial loss of income.
- Have exhausted all available annual and/or sick leave, as appropriate.
- Not have been approved for disability retirement.

Applications to become a recipient of transferred annual leave are initiated by the employee, or when the employee is not capable of making application, by another employee or representative.

The application will be submitted through the employee's activity to the CPAC, and must include the following:

- The completed form to include supporting medical documentation and proof of loss of at least 24 hours' pay due to the emergency.
- A statement from the potential recipient or recognized representative which releases the information for publication of a Civilian Personnel Bulletin to the workforce for the purpose of informing potential donors of the identity and circumstances of the employee. If release is denied, publicity of the crisis will be the responsibility of the requesting party.

An employee may donate annual leave to an approved recipient by forwarding two copies of a completed Leave Transfer Authorization Form to the CPAC. A first level official superior or supervisor is prohibited from receiving donated leave from a subordinate employee.

Absence Without Leave (AWOL)

Absence without leave is any absence from an employee's duty station that has not been authorized or approved by his supervisor. In addition, if an employee fails to request leave in advance or in accordance with directives, or if the request is denied, the employee will be considered AWOL. This means no pay is received, and the employee may face disciplinary action.

Holidays

Government employees are entitled to the following holidays each year:

New Year's Day

January 1

Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

3rd Monday in January

Presidents' Birthday

3rd Monday in February

Memorial Day

Last Monday in May

Independence Day

July 4

Labor Day

1st Monday in September

Columbus Day

2nd Monday in October

Veteran's Day

November 11

Thanksgiving Day

4th Thursday in November

Christmas Day

December 25

The CPAC publishes specific guidance on holiday observances prior to each holiday. Those employees who are not excused from duty because their work services are required will be entitled to holiday (half day) premium pay. For the exact dates of Federal holidays, see website <http://www.opm.gov/fedhol/index.htm>.

PAYROLL INFORMATION

References: AR 690-990-2, 5 CFR, Part 550, 551, and DOD 7000.14-R, Volume 8, Financial Management Reg. Call the CPAC for detailed information on pay policies.

Payday

Payday is every other Thursday. This amounts to 26 pay periods per year. Employees will receive a Leave and Earnings Statement (often referred to as an LES) mailed to their home address. These normally arrive early in the pay week. Any discrepancies in pay, deductions, or leave should be reported to the timekeeper, the CPAC Civilian Pay Liaison (531-8757), or Customer Service Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS).

Within-Grade-Increases

A within-grade-increase (WGI) is an increase in the employee's rate of basic pay by advancement from one step of his grade to the next after meeting the requirements for length of service and satisfactory performance. The prime factor in receiving a within-grade-increase is performing work at an acceptable level of competence. Several specific requirements must be met before within-grade-increases are granted.

A General Schedule (GS) employee must obtain 52 weeks of creditable service for each increase from step 1 through step 4; 104 weeks of creditable service for each increase from step 4 through step 7; 156 weeks of creditable service for each increase from step 7 through step 10. The employee must also have a permanent appointment, be compensated on a per annum basis, and be receiving a rate of pay below the maximum for the grade.

A prevailing rate employee under a regular wage schedule who has a work performance rating of satisfactory or better shall advance automatically to the next higher step within the grade at the beginning of the first applicable pay period following his completion of: 26 calendar weeks of service in step 1; 78 calendar weeks of service in step 2; and 104 calendar weeks of service in each of steps 3 and 4.

Locality Pay

Most General Schedule (GS) employees working in the 48 contiguous United States (includes Washington, DC; excludes Alaska and Hawaii) receive locality-based comparability payments, known as locality pay.

Since the amount of locality pay will depend on the geographic area where the employee works, the amount of locality pay may change if there is a change in duty stations. Locality pay will be paid as a part of an employee's biweekly salary. In addition, locality pay is used in the calculations for some pay-based actions, including retirement annuity and thrift savings contributions, life insurance, overtime and other premium pay.

Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES)

An employee is expected to perform his job effectively and conscientiously, meeting all performance standards. The Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES) is the guide for managing performance. It was designed to improve the total Army performance by:

- Communicating organizational goals and priorities, and Army values and ethics to employees.
- Establishing individual expectations for performance that reflect organizational goals and priorities.
- Facilitating frequent discussion among the Ratee and the rating chain about performance, expectations, professional development, and DA values and ethics.
- Providing an environment where all understand that they are important members of the Army Team.
- Requiring annual written individual evaluations.

The TAPES is divided into two separate systems: (1) the Base System covering employees in pay plans and grades WL, WG, WAS/GS-8 and below, (except career interns), and (2) the Senior System

covering employees in pay plans and grades GM, WS/GS-9 and above, employees in equivalent pay plans and grades, and Career Interns.

Written performance plans, DA Forms 7223-1 or 7222-1, are usually received within 30 days of the date an employee starts a new job or within 30 days of the employee's or supervisor's appointment. This plan states what is expected of an employee during a rating period. The supervisor will review and approve each employee's performance plan at the beginning of each rating period and any other time expectations change significantly.

In-Progress Reviews: Each supervisor will conduct formal discussions at the mid-point of each rating period and at other times as needed. Each supervisor will provide informal feedback and get the employee's input on performance expectations and accomplishments throughout the rating period.

Annual Rating Periods: All employees will have a normal rating cycle of 12-months based on grades as follows:

Senior System:

Grades 13-15, 1 Jul-30 Jun

Grades 9-12, 1 Nov-31 Oct

Base System:

Grades 1-8, The first day of the employee's month of birth through the last day of the month preceding the employee's month of birth. Example: The employee's month of birth is August. The employee's normal rating cycle would be 1 Aug through 31 Jul.

Interns receive a Special Rating 6 months after entry into the position and receive their first annual rating at the end of 12 months. They continue to be rated on this rating cycle until completion of the Intern Program at which time they are phased into one of the cyclic rating periods identified above.

Ratees cannot be rated until they perform under an approved performance plan for at least 120 days.

If an employee exceeds performance standards, the supervisor may officially recognize this accomplishment with a performance award. If the written standards are not met, the supervisor must take corrective action.

The above is a brief summary of the performance evaluation process. For more specific information, refer to AR 690-400, Chapter 4302, on the Internet at <http://cpol.army.mil/library>.

BENEFITS

Health Insurance

Permanent employees with a regularly scheduled tour of duty are eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan. A new employee has 31 days from the date of job appointment or eligibility to enroll. There are several plans and options available to meet individual and/or family needs. From approximately mid-November to mid-December, there is an Open Season during which employees may enroll or change options. For additional information on FEHB, see website http://cpol.army.mil/permis/p_benes.html#.

Compensation for On-the-Job Injury

Reporting Injuries: It is of utmost importance to report immediately to the supervisor any injury sustained on the job. All injuries should be reported regardless of how trivial they may seem. A minor injury can develop into a serious, complicated condition. The supervisor will provide Form CA-1, Notice of Injury, and assist in its completion. If medical treatment is required, the supervisor will issue a Form CA-16, Request for Examination and/or Treatment. To protect the employee's benefits, Form CA-1 must be completed within 30 days, otherwise Continuation of Pay (COP) will not be authorized. Form CA-2, Notice of Occupational Disease and Claim for Compensation, is filed when claiming an occupational disease. Medical evidence must be submitted to substantiate all absences from duty for which Worker's Compensation is claimed.

Benefits: Under the Federal Employee's Compensation Act (FECA), the employee is entitled to benefits for injuries sustained in the performance of his duty or for occupational disease resulting from his employment. These benefits include the following:

- **Medical Care:** Expenses for medical, surgical, and hospital care will be provided under the provisions of the Act. The employee may elect treatment by the Occupational Health Clinic or a physician of the employee's choice. Payment for chiropractic care is limited and must be substantiated by X-rays. The employee may also be paid for prescription drugs and other expenses involved in obtaining medical care. The employee's health insurance will not pay for the medical treatment of any on-the-job injury or occupational disease.
- **Continuation of Pay:** If unable to work because of a job-related injury, the employee may be paid regular salary up to and including 45 days. The continuation of pay begins on the day following the injury and is calendar days, not workdays. If light duty is available and the employee is

physically able to perform this duty, the employee must report to his supervisor for the work. Refusal to perform light duty may jeopardize employee entitlements under the Act.

- **Compensation During Periods of Disability:** If unable to work after the expiration of the 45 days continuation of pay, or unable to work due to an occupational disease, the employee may apply for continued compensation. The amount payable is determined by the employee's salary, dependents, and the degree of disability. If the employee is unable to return to his usual job, but able to perform other work, compensation will be made on the basis of loss of wage earning capacity. If the employee is totally and permanently disabled, compensation will be paid until death.
- **Scheduled Awards:** If the employee lost certain members or functions of his body (e.g., loss or use of an eye, hand or part of a hand), compensation will be received for a specified period of time based on the type of loss.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** In addition to the other benefits, the employee may receive compensation up to \$200 a month while pursuing approved vocational training.
- **Death Benefits:** In the event of death resulting from an occupational disease or work-related injury, the employee's dependents are entitled to certain benefits under the Act. Funeral and burial expenses may be paid up to a maximum of \$800.

Compensation and Leave: When unable to return to work because of an on-the-job injury and the 45 days continuation of pay has expired, the employee may elect the following:

- Leave without pay (LWOP) and apply for compensation benefits, or
- Sick and/or annual leave, and apply for compensation after sick and annual leave are exhausted.

The employee may not receive compensation while being paid for leave. If the employee elects to use sick or annual leave, he/she may have the opportunity to buy back the leave used and apply for compensation for the entire period. Buy back is computed as 100% of base salary and compensation is paid at either 75% or 66 2/3%, depending upon dependent status.

Employment Status Under Compensation: The employee receives full credit for retention and retirement while on LWOP and receiving worker's compensation. This time is also counted toward the completion of waiting periods for step increases, conversion to career tenure, and change in leave earnings category. Health and life insurance will continue if the employee meets certain requirements.

For further information pertaining to the Federal Workers' Compensation Program, contact the Federal Employees' Compensation Coordinator at the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), 531-4881. Immediately report all on-the-job injuries to the employee's immediate supervisor and file a claim if there is lost time or medical expenses related to the injury.

Life Insurance

As with health insurance, permanent employees with a regularly scheduled tour of duty are eligible to enroll in the Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) plan. Employees are automatically enrolled in the Basic Life unless they waive the coverage. Basic Life is equal to annual basic pay (rounded to the next \$1,000) plus \$2,000. There is an extra benefit for employees under age 45. This extra benefit doubles the amount of life insurance payable if you are age 35 or younger. Beginning on the employee's 36th birthday, the extra benefit decreases 10% each year until age 45 where there is no extra benefit. The extra benefit for employees under age 45 is provided without additional cost.

If Basic Life is chosen, employees are eligible for Option A Standard, Option B Additional, and/or Option C Family coverage. Additional options depend upon individual needs. Employees have 31 days from the date of job appointment or eligibility to elect coverage. A physical examination is not required. For additional information on FEGLI, see the below listed website: http://cpol.army.mil/permis/p_benes.html#.

Retirement Systems

There are two basic retirement systems for Federal employees. Most employees hired after 31 December 1983 are under the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS), while those hired prior to that date are normally under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The CSRS is a stand-alone system, and employees do not pay Social Security tax on their civil service pay. The FERS is a supplement to Social Security, and employees pay into both systems. Eligibility for retirement and other benefits vary between programs. For additional information, see website <http://cpol.army.mil/permis/pbenes.html#>.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The TSP is designed as a supplement to retirement. It is available to employees enrolled in CSRS and FERS, although many differences between the two plans exist. One common feature is that the investment is not taxed until withdrawn from the TSP system. Under CSRS, up to 5% of an employee's salary may be invested; while in FERS, employees may invest up to 10% of their salary. There are no employer contributions under CSRS; however, up to 5% of the FERS salary may be contributed by the employer to the plan. The amount depends upon the employee's contributions. For further information, visit the TSP Home Page at <http://www.tsp.gov> and <https://tspweb.tspsec.tsp.gov>.

Voluntary Contributions

Employees covered by the CSRS who want to receive a larger annuity than would be payable based on their service and "high-3" may establish a voluntary contribution account to purchase additional annuity. At retirement, each \$100 in an employee's voluntary contributions account (including interest earned) will provide an additional annuity of \$7 a year, plus 20 cents for each full year the employee is over age 55 at the time of retirement.

Employees covered by FERS are not eligible to make voluntary contributions. However, employees may retain funds on account that were deposited while subject to the CSRS.

For additional information on Voluntary Contributions and employee benefits, go to website <http://cpol.army.mil/permis/pbenes.html#> and click on any item of interest.

EMPLOYEE AWARENESS

Federal Employee Responsibilities and Conduct

All government employees are subject to standards of conduct, Department of Defense Directive 5500.7. Failure to comply with these provisions will cause adverse administrative action or criminal prosecution against an individual. Annual Standards of Conduct training or review of the regulation is mandatory. For additional information, see website <http://cpol.army.mil/permis/12.html>.

Grievance Procedure

Day-to-day discussions between employees and supervisors about working conditions and other employment matters are the best means of conducting effective work relations. However,

dissatisfactions and disagreements sometimes arise among people in any workforce. Although supervisors and managers try to resolve employee dissatisfactions in normal, day-to-day dealings with employees, when a matter cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the employee, he or she may seek resolution by filing a grievance. The whole intent behind the procedures is to allow employees to present grievances to management and have those grievances considered expeditiously, fairly, and impartially. The grievance procedures provide a formal process whereby employees can address their concerns without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal. The grievance procedures are covered under the Department of Defense Administrative Grievance System and the separate Negotiated Agreements between Fort Polk and the National Association of Government Employees and International Association of Fire Fighters. Employees need to insure that the proper forum is utilized and that timelines are strictly adhered to when initiating a grievance. Information on filing a grievance may be obtained from the appropriate union or the CPAC.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The HQ, JRTC & Fort Polk is an equal opportunity employer and, as such, provides a wide range of services to the population. The Office Equal Opportunity (OEOP) administers the following:

- EEO Complaints Program for Federal Civilian Employees;
- Applicants for employment, and former employees;
- The EO Complaint Program for soldiers and family members;
- The Special Emphasis/Ethnic Observance Program;
- The Affirmative Employment Program;
- Education and training in all matters related to EEO/EO.

The OEOP office is located in Building 1715; phone numbers are 531-1802/1804 and 531-1911. A hotline number is maintained at 531-1792 and can be reached 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Labor Relations

The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute (Statute) is built on a number of specific rights that are granted to employees, unions, and management. The most fundamental rights are those granted to employees. The Statute gives employees the right to organize themselves into a group called a bargaining unit and to select or create a particular union to represent the

group in dealing with management. Employees are entitled to make efforts to form a bargaining unit and a union to represent the unit without interference, coercion, threats, or retaliation from agency management. In short, agency management cannot try to influence employees in deciding whether to be represented by a union.

Furthermore, if a union is established, employees are free to join and assist the union, if they choose to do so. Regardless of whether they join and pay dues to the union, employees included in a bargaining unit are entitled to receive representation and assistance from the union in dealing with agency management. The union's obligation to represent all employees regardless of whether they join the union or pay dues is called the duty of fair representation.

At Fort Polk, three labor organizations (unions) have been granted exclusive recognition. The National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), Local R5-168, is the oldest and represents the largest number of Fort Polk employees. Nage, Local R5-168, was granted exclusive recognition on July 17, 1973, and is the exclusive representative for all non-supervisory wage grade and general schedule employees of the Headquarters, Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, the U.S. Army Medical Department Activity (MEDDAC), and the U.S. Army Dental Department Activity (DENTAC). The President of NAGE Local R5-168 may be reached at 531-7679.

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), Local F-215 is the second oldest and smallest of the Fort Polk unions. The IAFF, Local F-215, was granted exclusive recognition on May 15, 1980. The IAFF, Local F-215, represents all non-supervisory employees of the Fort Polk Fire Department.

The youngest bargaining unit on Fort Polk is comprised of nonappropriated fund activities (NAF) employees of the HQ, JRTC and Fort Polk. The National Association of Government Employees, Local R5-168 (NAF) gained exclusive recognition on May 16, 1988.

Management officials, supervisors, employees engaged in Federal personnel work in other than a purely clerical capacity, professional employees, employees with appointments not to exceed 90 days, and confidential employees are not represented by a union.

COMMUNICATION & AUTOMATION SYSTEMS

Electronic Communications

Electronic communications are provided to employees of the HQ, JRTC & Fort Polk for conducting official business. These systems

include facsimile machines (FAXs), E-mail and Internet access. The FAX machines are located in most offices while E-mail and Internet access are provided through individual computers at each workstation. Computer system access and E-mail user accounts will be requested for new employees by the responsible supervisor.

Employees should use E-mail resources responsibly and abide by normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct at all times. Inappropriate use of E-mail systems may be a basis for consideration of disciplinary action against employees.

Inappropriate E-mail usage includes:

- Pornography,
- Chain letters,
- Unofficial advertising,
- Soliciting or selling,
- Broadcast E-mail unnecessary advertisements of Army services,
- Broadcast E-mail messages of daily quotations and jokes, and
- Broadcast unsubstantiated virus warnings.

For more information on inappropriate use of E-mail contact the Directorate of Information Management (DOIM) at 531-2848.

Telephone Usage

A good telephone personality reflects positively upon the employee and the organization. Answering promptly indicates efficiency on the part of the employee as well as the organization. Telephones are provided for the conduct of business; therefore, personal calls, both incoming and outgoing, should be limited. Much of our business is conducted over the telephone and busy lines do not give customers access to the organization.

Employee Development

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), Training Office develops a training plan prior to the beginning of each fiscal

year. Organizational, occupational, and individual training and development needs for the installation are assessed in an annual survey and in an on going cycle as employee assignments and processes change. Needs identified in the assessment are prioritized to ensure that those most critical to mission accomplishment are met. Copies of the plan are distributed to each organization. More information concerning the plan may be obtained by calling Tami Culbreath at 531-1856.

Train

Headquarters, Department of the Army (DA) has designated TRAIN as the DA standard for processing and documenting all training instances. The TRAIN provides on-line access to user-friendly screens for training processes and functions. The TRAIN automates the process of creating a training request (DD Form 1556), routing it for approvals and authorizations, notifying employees of the decision, getting post-training evaluations, and updating employee training records. Supervisors and employees initiate training requests, schedule for training from an automated course catalog, approve training, certify training completion, and evaluate completed training on-line.

Tuition Assistance

Under 5 U.S.C 4107(a) in reference (b), training may not be authorized for the sole purpose of providing an opportunity to an employee to obtain an academic degree, except when it is necessary to relieve retention and recruitment problems in shortage occupations. Tuition assistance may be funded on a nondegree, course-by-course basis, when the training will improve individual and organizational performance and assist the agency in achieving mission and performance goals. Employees receiving grants, scholarships or Veterans education benefits that constitute 100 percent of course expenses are excluded from this policy.

Approval of tuition assistance is contingent on availability of funds. Requests for tuition assistance must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the class begins. Applications submitted after the course starts will be returned without action.

Employees will submit training requests to their immediate supervisor with details about the course content in the remarks section. The authorizing official and supervisor will determine if the course is appropriate for tuition assistance and the funds availability.

Funds may be provided for 100 percent of tuition, books and materials if the training is ESSENTIAL for satisfactory job performance.

A program is in place that gives the employee the opportunity to sign a promissory note in lieu of paying for the course upfront. The employee is responsible for routing their completed and approved DD Form 1556 to the CPAC Training Office, NLT 2 weeks prior to the starting date of the course. The CPAC, Training Office will attach a cover letter to the institution acknowledging the course approval and the intent by the government for payment. The school will be allowed to bill the Finance Office directly upon completion of the course by the employee. Employees are required to successfully complete the course with a 'C' or better for undergraduate work and a 'B' or better for graduate level work. Students who do not successfully complete the training will be required to reimburse funds paid. For further information, contact your supervisor or the CPAC, Training Office at 531-1856.

VISA TRAVELER'S CARD

DOD Travel Card Policy

Reference JTR Vol. 2, Part C1103 and Part E.C1250. It is the general policy of DOD that the Government travel card will be used by personnel to pay for all costs incidental to official business travel, including travel advances, lodging, transportation, rental cars, meals, and other incidental expenses. This card may not be used for personal purposes.

Process for Getting a Travel Card

All personnel who may be required to perform temporary duty (TDY) are eligible to apply for a VISA traveler's card. Instructions and forms for the card may be obtained from the G8 and/or Directorate of Resource Management, Bldg. 2508. The primary point of contact is Janice Gainous at 531-4044.

Monthly Travel Card Statements

Visa provides a monthly account summary that lists name, when and where charges were made, amounts of charges, and the status of each account holder's payments.

Travel Card Payments

The cardholder is expected to pay the entire account balance by the due date, as required by the General Services Administration (GSA) contract with VISA. Failure to make timely payments may result in card cancellation and disciplinary action. Travelers whose Government travel card has been canceled will not be authorized a travel advance for subsequent temporary duty travel.

Safety

All new employees are required to receive a one-on-one safety briefing from their supervisor prior to starting their new job. Information describing any hazards related to the performance of their job, what personal protective equipment will be required to be worn, and other measures they must take to reduce or eliminate the hazards. To perform certain jobs, individuals are required to pass physical tests and receive medical certification. Such tests are the fit test for respirators and a blood test for the Blood Borne-Pathogen Program.

The HQ, JRTC & Fort Polk Safety Office supports the workforce. Safety and health are responsibilities that are shared by the Safety Office, directors, supervisors, and employees. Safety is not just an idea-it's a top priority. The Army's philosophy concerning safety includes the following:

- Nothing we do in the workplace warrants the unnecessary risk of life or limb.
- Supervisors are Safety Officers, and risk management is a major part of their duties.
- You were born with a sixth sense concerning safety-use it.
- Fix accountability for accidents. Accidents and injuries cost money, time, and human sacrifice.
- Supervisors must be proactive and aggressive concerning safety.

All accidents must be reported to your supervisor immediately. Your supervisor is required to report all accidents to the Safety Office.

The POC for employee safety issues is Mr. Ray Dufour at 531-2752/4008.

Occupational Health

The mission of the Occupational Health Program is to provide a comprehensive program that promotes the health, efficiency, and well-being of the active duty military and civilian personnel for all of the HQ, JRTC and Fort Polk community. This program ensures that all eligible personnel are physically and mentally suited to their work at the time of and during their assignment; protects employees against adverse effects of safety and health hazards in the work environment; reduces economic loss through the civilian and military injury/illness prevention program; and ensures active duty and DOD personnel are medically deployable and combat ready. These missions are accomplished through the following programs:

- **MILITARY MEDICAL IN-PROCESSING/SCHOOL OF STANDARDS:** Newly assigned active duty personnel are screened and provided immunizations, DNA, HIV, and hearing tests to ensure 90-100% compliance for deployment readiness.
- **JOB-RELATED/UNIT-BASED MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE:** Active duty and civilian personnel are monitored for effects of hazardous exposures.
- **ADMINISTRATIVE MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE:** Includes pre-placement, light duty, periodic and fitness for duty physicals for civilian personnel.

- BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN (BBP) AND CONTAMINATED EXPOSURE: Monitor personnel with occupations that facilitate actual or potential exposure to BBP; follow personnel who receive contaminated exposures.
- RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM: Pulmonary testing, medical screening, and clearance for respirator usage.
- VISION CONSERVATION: Oriented toward the preservation of eyesight through periodic vision screening, and scheduling ocular exams for occupations requiring safety glasses protection.
- HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM: Oriented toward the preservation of hearing through periodic monitoring, screening, testing, and counseling for occupations requiring hearing protection.
- CIVILIAN RESOURCE CONSERVATION PROGRAM (CRCP): Provides diagnosis, treatment, and tracking of personnel who sustain job-related injuries or illnesses in the performance of their duties; provides palliative treatment of non-occupational illnesses/injuries that affect the employee's work performance.
- OCCUPATIONAL WORK-SITE EVALUATIONS: Identifies high risk work areas/operations that pose a potential risk to employees during work performance; identifies physical limitations/restrictions related to specific work environments; assist civilian personnel and supervisors with job placement of employees having permanent medical restrictions.
- EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAM: Administers immunizations and tracks personnel who require immunizations IAW various DOD guidelines geared for prevention of communicable outbreaks (Rubella, Rubeola, Mumps, IPPD, Hepatitis B/A, Influenza-Flu, etc.).
- IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM: Administers immunizations to deploying active duty, USAR, NG, and DOD civilian personnel as well as retirees/family members traveling to foreign countries.
- DNA REGISTRY PROGRAM: obtains, completes, and maintains data on DNA specimens for all armed forces personnel and DOD deployable personnel.

- REPRODUCTIVE HAZARDS SURVEILLANCE: Intended to educate, counsel and monitor pregnant personnel that are exposed to reproductive hazards in the work environment.

Hours Of Operation

0800-1600 Monday-Friday
 0730-1200 Tuesdays
 (Military Inprocessing only)
 1400-1530 Tuesday & Friday
 (Anthrax Immunization)

Telephone Numbers

PHONE: 531-6131/2951
 FAX: 531-8728
 BEEPER: (318) 238-2227

ETHICS TRAINING

All supervisors are required to provide ethics training to new Government employees within 90 days of entering on duty (5 CFR 2638.703).

Employees are to be directed to the 1998 Ethics Training for Department of Defense personnel website. This website, titled, "CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, How to Avoid the Headaches" can be accessed at

http://www.defenselink.mil/dodgc/defense_ethics/ethics_training/450test2.htm. For questions the employee may have, an e-mail address and phone number for the Standards of Conduct Office are also located at this site.

In addition, the U.S. Office of Government Ethics Home Page contains online pamphlets of specific ethical issues for our employees:

- Gifts Between Employees
<http://www.usoge.gov/pubs/giftsemp.pdf>
- Gifts From Outside Sources
<http://www.usoge.gov/pubs/giftsout.pdf>
- Conflicts of Interest and Government Employment
<http://www.usoge.gov/pubs/conflict.pdf>
- Gifts of Travel and Other Benefits
<http://www.usoge.gov/pubs/trvlgift.pdf>
- Rules for the Road <http://www.usoge.gov/pubs/rules4rd.pdf>

Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to read these files. If you need to load a free copy, please visit:
<http://www.opm.gov/HTML/ACROBAT.HTM>

RETURN SIGNED FORM TO THE CPAC, TRAINING OFFICE, ATTN:
TAMI CULBREATH, BLDG. 422.

I HAVE PRESENTED THE NEW EMPLOYEE
HANDBOOK TO

(PRINT) EMPLOYEE NAME

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE
DATE SIGNED _____

I HAVE READ THE NEW EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
AND I UNDERSTAND THE PROGRAMS THAT ARE
AVAILABLE TO ME. THE HANDBOOK HAS ALSO
PROVIDED ME WITH VALUABLE POINTS OF
CONTACT AND WEBSITES FOR REFERENCE.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE
DATE SIGNED _____